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Lucha Libre: Mexican street wrestling

BY [MATT DAYHOFF](#) · AUGUST
25, 2012

Who likes pro wrestling?
Who doesn't?

As the popularity of professional wrestling continues to skyrocket in the United States and all over the world, the admission prices for big events like tonight's [WWE Raw World Tour](#) at the [Peoria Civic](#)

[Center](#) get further out of reach for those living on a tight budget.

In parts of Mexico City where abject poverty is frighteningly common, traveling caravans of independent street wrestlers known as luchadores bring their distinctive style of pro wrestling to the people. The elaborate masks and fast, high-flying action of lucha libre wrestling is wildly popular in Mexico, and the independent circuit gives the country's less fortunate a chance to share in the excitement.

Brazilian-born photographer [Alexandre Meneghini](#) has spent some time in the poor neighborhoods of Mexico City documenting the spectacle of Mexican street wrestling.

Also, here's an interview

from Journal Star
reporter John Sharp
with one of the most
well-known and popular
lucha libre-style
wrestlers in the WWE:
[High-flying Rey](#)
[Mysterio talks about his](#)
[future, and decorated](#)
[past](#)



*In this photo taken on Saturday,
May 26, 2012, young wrestler
11-year-old Edgar Leal poses
for a photo before his
performance in downtown
Mexico City. Independent
backyard shows form an
underground wrestling circuit
for Mexico City's poor who lack
the money to buy a 300 pesos*

(\$22) ticket to see a

*professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



In this photo taken May 13, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestlers Damian 666, center, and his son Bestia 666, walk towards the ring to perform in a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken May 13, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestlers, El Dolar, top, and Dement Extreme perform during a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken on Nov. 6, 2011, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Chicago Rouge, center, visits with another wrestler prior to their performance on a grassy lot in a makeshift wrestling ring in Coacalco, Mexico. Independent backyard

*shows form an underground
wrestling circuit for Mexico
City's poor who lack the money
to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket
to see a professional wrestling
event at one of Mexico City's big
arenas. (AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 5,
2012, children run after
Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler El
Cupido Junior who is carrying a
box containing ice cream treats
during his performance in a
Caravan Super Tarin traveling
wrestling show on the outskirts
of Mexico City. The caravan
brings Mexico's Lucha Libre
wrestling to the capital's
poorest neighborhoods,
orphanages and prisons, giving
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professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 13,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestlers Dama del Ring, right,
Black Fury, second right,
Estrella de Fuego, second left
and La Chola, wait for their turn
to perform in a Caravan Super
Tarin traveling wrestling show
on the outskirts of Mexico City.
The caravan brings Mexico's
Lucha Libre wrestling to the
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prisons, giving free
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*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken on Sunday,
May 13, 2012, Mexican Lucha
Libre wrestlers Super Tarin
breaks lamps on the back of
Leon Dorado during a
performance in a poor
neighborhood at the outskirts of
Mexico City. (AP
Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken on Saturday,
May 5, 2012, a Mexican Lucha
Libre wrestler wears a T-shirt
with folk saint Santa Muerte as
he readies for his performance
in a Caravan Super Tarin
traveling wrestling show on the*

outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken on Sunday, May 13, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Guerrero Mixtico, waits for his turn to perform in a poor neighborhood at the outskirts of Mexico City. (AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken April 30, 2012, a Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler poses for fans as he walks towards a makeshift ring for a performance in downtown Mexico City. Independent backyard shows form an underground wrestling circuit for Mexico City's poor who lack the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas. (AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken May 13, 2012, fans of Mexican Lucha Libre cheer as they watch wrestlers perform in a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free

performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken May 20, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Shitara jumps over Black Machine during a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken May 5, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Desafio, center, grimaces during his performance in a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas. (AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken on Sunday, May 27, 2012, Mexican Lucha

*Libre wrestler "Super Tarin"
performs with artificial blood in
downtown Mexico City.*

*Independent backyard shows
form an underground wrestling
circuit for Mexico City's poor
who lack the money to buy a
300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a
professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken June 9,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestlers Brazo de Plata Junior,
left, and Shadow perform
outside the ring in a poor
downtown neighborhood in
Mexico City. Independent
backyard shows form an
underground wrestling circuit
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(\$22) ticket to see a
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one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 5,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestler Big Mama performs
outside the ring in a Caravan
Super Tarin traveling wrestling
show on the outskirts of Mexico
City. The caravan brings
Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling
to the capital's poorest
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*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



In this photo taken May 13, 2012, fans watch as watch Mexican Lucha Libre wrestlers Big Mama, left, and Black Fury, are overtaken by their opponents during a performance in a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas. (AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken May 5, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestlers Caricia, top, and Medic Tercero perform during a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings Mexico's Lucha Libre wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods, orphanages and prisons, giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken April 30, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Johnny Villalobos,

*center, walks around the ring
during his performance in
downtown Mexico City.
Independent backyard shows
form an underground wrestling
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who lack the money to buy a
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professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.
(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 13,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestler Mixteco Jr., hugs an
elderly woman during a
Caravan Super Tarin traveling
wrestling show on the outskirts
of Mexico City. The caravan
brings Mexico's Lucha Libre
wrestling to the capital's
poorest neighborhoods,
orphanages and prisons, giving
free performances to those who
don't have the money to buy a
300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a*

*professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 20,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestler Crazy Clown waits to
use a restroom prior to
participating in a Caravan Super
Tarin traveling wrestling show,
on the outskirts of Mexico City.
The caravan brings wrestling to
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neighborhoods giving free
performances to those who
don't have the money to buy a
300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a
professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



In this photo taken May 20, 2012, fans watch Mexican Lucha Libre wrestlers, Apolo Navarro, wearing green pants, and Garra de Aguila perform during a Caravan Super Tarin traveling wrestling show, on the outskirts of Mexico City. The caravan brings wrestling to the capital's poorest neighborhoods giving free performances to those who don't have the money to buy a 300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a professional wrestling event at one of Mexico City's big arenas. (AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)



In this photo taken April 30, 2012, Mexican Lucha Libre wrestler Johnny Villalobos,

*center, lies among the audience
during his performance in
downtown Mexico City.
Independent backyard shows
form an underground wrestling
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professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.
(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken May 20,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestler Leon Dorado scowls as
fake blood runs down his face
during a performance by the
Caravan Super Tarin traveling
wrestling show on the outskirts
of Mexico City. The caravan
brings wrestling to the capital's
poorest neighborhoods, giving
free performances to those who
don't have the money to buy a
300 pesos (\$22) ticket to see a
professional wrestling event at*

one of Mexico City's big arenas.

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



*In this photo taken June 9,
2012, Mexican Lucha Libre
wrestler Lunathor rests after his
performance in a poor
downtown neighborhood in
Mexico City. Independent
backyard shows form an
underground wrestling circuit
for Mexico City's poor who lack
the money to buy a 300 pesos
(\$22) ticket to see a
professional wrestling event at
one of Mexico City's big arenas.*

*(AP Photo/Alexandre
Meneghini)*



**Matt
Dayhoff**

Matt
Dayhoff
started as
a

photographer
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1992
shortly
after
graduating
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Ohio
University
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In 2009,
he moved
into the
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as an
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editor and
producer
and is now
responsible
for helping
manage
and edit
much of
the
editorial
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